

CLAIMS

1. An article-packaging member defining an extruded cross section, said extruded cross section extending along substantially an entire length of said packaging member and comprising:

5 a structural framework formed of a relatively rigid extruded plastic material;

a bundling channel formed in said extruded cross section along an exterior face of said article-packaging member; and

at least one pliable projection formed of a relatively pliable plastic material extending from said structural framework.

10 2. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 1 wherein said structural framework comprises:

an external support framework formed of a rigid extruded plastic material; and

an internal support framework formed of a rigid extruded plastic material.

15 3. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 2 wherein said structural framework defines a continuous cross section including said external support framework and said internal support framework.

20 4. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 2 wherein said at least one pliable projection comprises a set of pliable projections extending from said external support framework.

25 5. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 1 wherein said bundling channel is open to an exterior of said article-packaging member and defines a substantially planar recessed surface partially bounded by sidewalls.

6. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 5 wherein said sidewalls of said bundling channel are substantially perpendicular to said recessed surface of said bundling channel.

7. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 5 wherein said recessed surface is supported by an internal support framework of said structural framework.

8. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 5 wherein opposite cross-sectional extremities of said recessed surface are supported by an internal support framework of said structural framework.

9. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 5 wherein opposite cross-sectional extremities of said recessed surface and a midpoint of said opposite cross-sectional extremities are supported by an internal support framework of said structural framework.

10. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 5 wherein said substantially planar recessed surface extends along substantially an entire length of said bundling channel parallel to an opposing exterior face of said structural framework.

11. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 5 wherein a width dimension of said recessed surface is at least 25% of an average width dimension of said packaging member.

12. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 5 wherein said substantially planar recessed surface is unbounded at opposite ends of said bundling channel, whereby a portion of a bundling band may extend through said opposite ends of said bundling channel in contact with said recessed surface.

13. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 1 wherein said extruded cross section further comprises an additional bundling channel formed in said extruded cross section along an alternate exterior face of said article-packaging member.

14. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 1 wherein said extruded cross section defines a structural thickness dimension that assumes a substantially lower value in an area of

said bundling channel and a substantially higher value in an area outside of said bundling channel.

15. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 1 wherein said extruded cross section defines a structural thickness dimension that assumes a substantially higher value in areas of said pliable projections and a substantially lower value in areas outside of said pliable projections.

16. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 1 wherein said at least one pliable projection comprises a set of pliable projections defining a support plane displaced from said structural framework.

17. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 1 wherein said article-packaging member further comprises a set of partial cross-cuts defining sides of a packaging member quadrilateral, wherein said partial cross-cuts extend a sufficient distance through said extruded cross section to create a pivoting connection between selected sides of said packaging member quadrilateral.

18. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 17 wherein said partial cross-cuts extend from a top surface of said packaging member to, but not through, a bottom side of said packaging member, wherein said bottom side of said packaging member defines a bottom surface of said packaging member opposite said top surface of said packaging member.

19. An article-packaging member defining an extruded cross section, said extruded cross section extending along substantially an entire length of said packaging member and comprising:

a structural framework formed of a relatively rigid extruded plastic material; and
a set of partial cross-cuts defining sides of a packaging member quadrilateral, wherein said partial cross-cuts extend a sufficient distance through said extruded cross section to create a pivoting connection between selected sides of said packaging member quadrilateral.

20. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 19 wherein said partial cross-cuts extend from a top surface of said packaging member to, but not through, a bottom side of said packaging member, wherein said bottom side of said packaging member defines a bottom surface of said packaging member opposite said top surface of said packaging member.

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21. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 19 further comprising a bundling channel formed in said extruded cross section along an exterior face of said article-packaging member.

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22. An article-packaging member as claimed in claim 19 further comprising at least one set of pliable projections formed of a relatively pliable plastic material extending from said structural framework.

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23. A plastic article-packaging member defining a cross section, said cross section extending along substantially an entire length of said packaging member and comprising:

a structural framework formed of a relatively rigid plastic material;

a bundling channel formed in said cross section along an exterior face of said article-packaging member; and

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at least one pliable projection formed of a relatively pliable plastic material extending from said structural framework.